

ST. MARY'S CHURCH, BRIDGEWATER.

THE corporation have determined to commence the repair of this church, to the condition of which we drew attention some time since, by removing the rough-cast with which the walls have been covered. When this was first put on, much of the ornamental stonework (as in too many other instances) was cut away to form a flat surface, and save trouble; niches were filled up with brickwork, and other abominations committed. We trust the committee appointed to consider the subject will go into the matter thoroughly, and effect the complete restoration of the building. Our hint to the *Bridgewater Times* on the matter* was not lost sight of, but was ably urged in a leading article the following week.

Relative to our remark on the necessity of taking the advice of competent professional men in such cases, the *Bridgewater Times* says, of that which is wrongly called "the economical system,"—"it gives rise to the veriest empiricism in architecture; being as dangerous to the buildings placed under such a system, and to the pockets of the public, as it is to the deluded individuals who place themselves under the care of the ignorant pretender of the healing art, and sacrifice their health and their money to the mistaken notion that they are doing the best for the one, and "in avoiding professional assistance," saying the other. Every day's experience proves this to be the case, and also that empirics are to be found as universally in every science or profession, under some form or other, as in the popular line of quackery in medicine; we would point to this extract from THE BUILDERS, as offering a salutary warning to public bodies, who, collectively, are so liable to fall victims to jobbing, which, as individuals, a lively regard for their own interests does in most cases prevent."

PROVINCIAL NOTES.

THE coast defences have been of late engaging the attention of government, and orders have been given for the preparation of thirty-three towers between Hastings and Seaford. The tops of these towers were cemented over in dome-form up to the top of the spindle on which the swivel gun was fixed. The whole of that covering is to be forthwith taken off, and a new traversing course of stone to be laid down.—On the recommendation of the Southampton Water Committee, a sum not exceeding 150*l.* is to be advanced for the purpose of trying the Chinese system of boring at the artesian well, that system having been found to be so effectual, as well as economical, when tried in the south of France. The cost of the necessary machinery will not exceed 20*l.*, and the cost of working, 2*s.* 6*d.* a foot. Mr. Lankester's offer of gratuitous superintendence, too, has been accepted.—A part of the Weymouth esplanade has been so much injured by the lash of the sea, during a late gale, that the whole must be taken down and rebuilt, at a probable expense of nearly 1,000*l.*—The stone pier between the Bill of Portland and Cavé's hole, used for the shipment of Portland blocks, was also washed away, with a great quantity of large stones, working gear, &c.—Steeple Ashton Church was consecrated on the 1st instant, by the bishop and a corps of 40 of his clergy.—The Waterworks at Chepstow are in course of improvement, at considerable expense, in order to provide a regular supply of water to the town.—Queen Adelaide has contributed 20*l.* towards the erection of the national school and schoolmaster's house at Stratton, Cornwall, and Carteret has presented 100*l.* towards the same commendable purpose.—The new church of St. Mary Magdalene, Barnstable, is to be consecrated on the 21st instant.—The Hereford Improvement Act, which, it is said, cost about 1,500*l.*, must have nevertheless been a very careless conception, if we may judge from one stupid blunder, which provides against the making of gentlemen's carriages in the public streets. The marginal title-note, or explication of the clause, while it left the graver error uncorrected, incidentally betrayed the intended meaning to have been directed against the much more likely nuisance of washing such vehicles in the public streets,

a nuisance which there has happened lately to be occasion to put down, but which, of course, this much more costly than correct production gives no power at all to do.—Messrs. Travis and Mangnall have prepared plans, and are now getting in the foundations for a warehouse for Robert Gardner in Cooper-street and Bond-street, Manchester, opposite the Athenæum.—The church in Springfield-lane, Salford, Manchester, is now nearly finished, in the early English style; Mr. Lane is the architect. Mr. Lane is also erecting a church at Finwalds Mount, near Castleton, Isle of Man.—A church is proposed to be built at Moss Side, near Manchester.—A new "Institution of Mechanical Engineers" was formed at Birmingham on Wednesday last, to enable mechanics and engineers engaged in the different manufactories, railways, and other establishments in the kingdom, to meet and correspond, and by a mutual interchange of ideas respecting improvements in the various branches of mechanical science, to increase their knowledge, and give an impulse to inventions likely to be useful to the world. The present Institution of Civil Engineers it was thought, from the multiplicity of other pursuits legitimately belonging to it, left ample field for the operations of such an assistant Institution for Practical Engineering without prejudice to either.—The estimate for the church at Balby cum Hesthorpe, proposed to be erected and endowed by the liberal aid of Miss Banks, is 1,000*l.*; value of endowment 5,000*l.*; probable expense of parsonage-house and schools 1,000*l.* more. The council, who possess 798 acres of land, yielding an annual rent of 1,577*l.*, are expected to meet the proposed boon in a liberal manner.—The proposed joint parochial cemetery at Cambridge, will be for behoof of thirteen parishes; nine acres of land have been selected for purchase, and a good understanding come to as to the allotment to the several parishes. The sanction of the bishop has been obtained, and the consent of the Church Building Commissioners in course of next month is confidently anticipated.—The Cambridge Gas Company have reduced the price of gas to 8*s.* per 1,000 feet from Michaelmas last.

OLD QUARRIES FOR NEW ANTIQUARIES.

"Glimpses of glory ne'er forgot
That tell the glories of a sunset sea.
What once had been—what now is not
But, oh! what again shall brightly be."
Moore's *Epicurean*.

SIR,—It has been often said, that "there is nothing new but what has been forgotten." Yet the present generation is one which not only has forgotten what of old has been, but, full of conceit in its own occasional revivals of ancient discoveries, is ever boasting of them as original, while it turns away with ridicule and contempt from ancient quarries, in which the petrified vestigia of still more ancient lore turn up in abundance, and in fragmentary integrity and perfection; though, undoubtedly, amongst the most heterogeneous and useless rubbish, which alone, however, have our modern Cognoscenti been as yet, in general, able to discover in such treasure heaps.

In truth, like *Æsop's* cock, they turn tail upon the dung-heap; and, while scraping and scattering it in the winds with claw and spur, they recognise neither the value nor even the very existence of the gems which it contains. Yet here, I venture to say, we have, in many an old quaint author, quarries of rubbish and of something else, which will be, ere long, ransacked by a new order of antiquaries, or archæologists; and much that is not only new, but astonishing in the scientific history of our globe, in more or less remotely ancient times, at length be fully elicited. And not only in the written records of antiquity, amongst all civilized nations, shall we dig in and work out such quarries of interest and curiosity, but we shall find materials of inestimable value even to us, already stereotyped in the traditional though unwritten usages of many nations, both civilized and savage; and especially in the knick-knack knowledge of those stagnant and eternal remnants of ancient life and lore, the ultra-civilized and antique occupants of the "flowery land;" and even in many of those other "tribes and tongues," more usually deemed to be uncivilized, unripe, germs of never yet full-blown humanity, than melancholy relics of a

long departed glory, as these antiquarian researches will most likely prove them to be.

I have been led into the present somewhat discursive train of remarks by the perusal of more than one incidental communication in recent BUILDERS; but more particularly by the intimation, that an intelligent operative had wandered forth amongst foreign tribes, and gathered up a few of those stray fragments—a few of those probably traditional stereotypes or petrifications—of what may eventually be proved to be the remnants of what was once one grand and universal system of most ancient enlightenment, practised, perhaps, by those very workers in stone, and iron, and brass, and wood, of whom we read in that unquestionably most ancient book of all books, the Bible.

The circumstance reminds me of another source of valuable hints, derived from some obscure and mysterious origin in traditional usage, pointed out in one instance by a talented friend of my own, Mr. Robert Chambers, in his well known journal, about the time that the daguerreotype first began to excite an interest amongst the men of science and art in this country. This was the fact, that in the far northern county of Aberdeen, when he himself was a youth, he remembered that the boys at school had a knack of doing something precisely similar, derived, traditionally, from other boys, just as the juvenile games have been handed down amongst this numerous, knowing, and ancient tribe of little Pictish men, from time immemorial, with little of the more worldly-wise and time-learned intervention of their adult "governors."

My desire in this, as in a previous communication, incidentally called forth on the subject of the distillation of ammonia from pure rain water, known of old, though regarded as a modern discovery, is, I confess, to turn the pointed attention of your readers to the occasional gems of ancient art and science that lie profusely scattered, though obscured and hid amongst much rubbish of a less ancient, but not, for all that, of a modern description; and to induce them, by curiosity and interest, to bestir themselves actively in the more general working of this no less valuable than curious quarry of aboriginal lore, whether as it exists in ancient books, in antiquated nations, in savage tribes, or even in boyish sports of the hopeful progeny "of savage or of sage."

Only let this novel order of antiquaries, while they may treat the rubbish with as mighty and supreme contempt as they may choose, take just such care as our geologists now do to discriminate and separate the gems of petrification, which are covered and hidden under the rubbish, not confounding the one with the other, like the ignorant and conceited dung-hill bird of *Æsop*.

I cannot conclude without again alluding to the Chinese Quarry now being opened to the discriminating eyes of our new order of antiquaries. The Chinese are a most wonderful people, and I do believe, that after all, we know comparatively little of all their traditional possessions of science and of art. Every year some new discovery of this order is being made, and the observations on Artesian Wells in the BUILDERS, reminds me, that it now appears, that the Chinese mode of boring these very wells is as much superior to the old established European mode, as the splendid Chinese pigeon, and other animals from the flowery land in the British Museum, are superior to those we have.

China, then, is a quarry which ought to be most diligently and perseveringly dug, for its valuable petrifications of aboriginal or primitive science and art,—not its own, but only embodied in its stagnant mud, and treasured there, and handed down to a more enlightened generation, who shall understand their full significance, and be able to read therefrom the scientific pages of the past; gathering from such isolated yet connected hieroglyphics, a meaning no more limited to the mere sense of each little hieroglyph so recorded and observed, than is the sense of a whole sentence embodied in each of the alphabetic characters in the current of which it is borne along.

J. E. D.

SAVE-ALL.—Mr. Budd, of Swansea, has taken out a patent for the application, in the manufacture of iron, of linkers produced in the combustion of coal, and heretofore regarded as useless.

* See p. 421, "Why Employ an Architect?"